

## **PRAISE FOR THE GIFT OF GIFTS**

### **NO. 2247**

**A SERMON**  
**INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD'S-DAY, MARCH 13, 1892**  
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*“Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.”*  
*2 Corinthians 9:15*

IN the chapter from which my text is taken, Paul is stirring up the Christians at Corinth to be ready with liberal gifts for the poor saints at Jerusalem. He finishes by reminding them of a greater gift than any they could bring, and by this one short word of praise, “Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift,” he sets all their hearts a-singing. Let men give as liberally as they may, you can always proclaim the value of their gift, you can cast it up, and reckon its worth, but God’s gift is unspeakable, unreckonable.

You cannot fully estimate the value of what God gives. The Gospel is a Gospel of giving and forgiving. We may sum it up in those two words, and hence, when the true spirit of it works upon the Christian, he forgives freely, and he also gives freely. The large heart of God breeds large hearts in men, and they who live upon His bounty are led by His Spirit to imitate that bounty according to their power.

However, I am not going, on the present occasion, to say anything upon the subject of liberality. I must get straight away to the text, hoping that we may really drink in the spirit of it, and out of full hearts, use the apostle’s language with intenser meaning than ever as we repeat his words, “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.”

I shall commence by saying that *salvation is altogether the gift of God*, and as such is to be received by us freely. Then I shall try to show that *this gift is unspeakable*, and in the third place, that *for this gift thanks should be rendered to God*. Though it is unspeakable, yet we should speak our praise of it. In this way you will see, as of old preachers used to say, the text naturally falls apart.

**I.** We begin with the thought that SALVATION IS ALTOGETHER THE GIFT OF GOD.

Paul said, “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.” Over and over again, we have proclaimed that salvation is wholly of grace, not of works nor of wages, but it is the gift of God’s great bounty to undeserving men. Often as we have preached this truth, we shall have to keep on doing so as long as there are men in the world who are self-righteous, and as long as there are minds in the world so slow to grasp the meaning of the word “grace,” that is, “free favor,” and as long as there are memories that find it difficult to retain the idea of salvation being God’s free gift.

Let us say, simply and plainly, that salvation must come to us as a gift from God, for salvation comes to us by the Lord Jesus, and *what else could Jesus be?* The essence of salvation is the gift of God’s Only Begotten Son to die for us, that we might live through Him. I think you will agree with me that it is inconceivable that men should ever have merited that God should give His Only begotten Son to them.

To give Christ to us, in any sense, must have been an act of divine charity, but to give Him up to die on yonder cruel and bloody tree, to yield Him up as a sacrifice for sin, must be a free favor, passing the limits of thought.

It is not supposable that any man could deserve such love. It is plain that if man’s sins needed a sacrifice, he did not deserve that a sacrifice should be found for him. The fact of his need proves his demerit and his guiltiness. He deserves to die, he may be rescued by Another dying for him, but he certainly cannot claim that the eternal God should take from His bosom His Only Begotten and Well-

beloved Son, and put Him to death. The more you look that thought in the face, the more you will reject the idea that, by any possible sorrow, or by any possible labor, or by any possible promise, a man could put himself into the position of deserving to have Christ to die for him. If Christ is to come to save sinners, it must be as a gift, a free gift of God. The argument, to my mind, is conclusive.

Besides that, over and over again, in God's Word, *we are told that salvation is not of works*. Although there are many who cling to the notion of man's works as a ground of salvation, yet as long as this Book stands, and there are eyes to read it, it will bear witness against the idea of human merit, and it will speak out plainly for the doctrine that men are saved by faith, and not by works.

Not only once, but often it is written, "The just shall live by faith," moreover, we are told, "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace." The very choice of the way of salvation by believing, rather than by works, is made by God on purpose that He might show that grace is a gift. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt: but to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Faith is that virtue, that grace, which is chosen to bring us salvation because it never takes any of the glory to itself.

Faith is simply the hand that takes. When the beggar receives alms, he does not bless the hand that takes, but blesses the hand that gives, therefore we do not praise the faith that receives, but the God who gives the unspeakable gift. Faith is the eye that sees. When we see an object, we delight in the object, rather than in the eye that sees it, therefore do we glory, not in our faith, but in the salvation which God bestows. Faith is appointed as the porter to open the gate of salvation because that gate turns upon the hinges of free grace.

In the next place, be it always remembered that we cannot be saved by the merit of our own works, because *holy works are themselves a gift*, the work of the grace of God. If you have faith, and joy, and hope, who gave them to you? These did not spring up spontaneously in your heart. They were sown there by the hand of love. If you have lived a godly life for years, if you have been a diligent servant of the church and of your God, in whose strength have you done it? Is there not One who works all our works in us?

Could you work out your salvation with fear and trembling if God did not first work in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure? How can that, then, claim a reward which is, in itself, the gift of God? I think the ground is cut right away from those who would put confidence in human merit, when we show, first of all, that in Scripture, salvation is clearly said to be "not of works, lest any man should boast," and secondly, that even the good works of believers are the fruit of a renewed life, for "we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

*"All that I was, my sin, my guilt,  
My death, was all mine own;  
All that I am, I owe to Thee,  
My gracious God, alone."*

Further, if salvation were not a free gift, *how else could a sinner get it?* I will pass over some of you, who fancy that you are the best people in the world. It is sheer fancy, mark you, without any truth in it. But I will say nothing about you. There are however, some of us who know that we were not the best people in the world, we who sinned against God, and knew it, and who were broken into pieces under a sense of our guilt. I know, for one, that there would have been no hope of heaven for me, if salvation had not been the free gift of God to those who deserved it not.

After ministering among you for nearly thirty-seven years, I stand exactly where I stood when I first came to Christ, a poor sinner and nothing at all, but taking Christ as the free gift of God to me, as I took Him at first when yet but a lad, I fled to Him for salvation.

Ask any of the people of God who have been abundant in service, and constant in prayer, whether they deserve aught at the hand of God, and those who have most to be thankful for will tell you that they have nothing that they have not received. Ask these, whom God has honored to the conversion of many, whether they lay any claim to the grace of God, whether they have any merit, and whether in their hand they dare bring a price, and seek to buy of God His love, they will loathe the very thought. There is no way to heaven for you and me, my friend convinced of sin, unless all the way we are led by grace, and unless salvation is the gift of God.

But once more, *look at the privileges which come to us through salvation!* I cannot, as I value those privileges, conceive for a minute that they are purchasable, or that they come to us as the result of our desert. They must be a gift, they are so many and so glorious as to be altogether outside the limit of our furthest search, and beyond the height of our utmost reach. We cannot by our efforts compass any salvation of any sort, but if we could, it certainly would not be such a salvation as this. Let us look then, at our privileges.

Here comes first, “the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.” He that believes in Christ has no sin. His sin is blotted out. It has ceased to be. Christ has finished it, and he is unto God as though he had never sinned. Can any sinner deserve that?

*“Here’s pardon for transgressions past,  
It matters not how black their cast,  
And oh, my soul, with wonder view,  
For sins to come, here’s pardon too!”*

Can any sinner bring a price that will purchase such a boon as that? No, such mercy must be a gift.

Next, everyone that believes in Christ is justified, and looked upon by God as being perfectly righteous. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to him, and he is “accepted in the Beloved.” By this he becomes not only innocent, that is, pardoned, but he becomes praiseworthy before God. This is justification. Can any guilty man deserve that? Why, he is covered with sin, defiled from head to foot! Can he deserve to be arrayed in the sumptuous robe of the divine righteousness of Christ, and “be made the righteousness of God in him”? It is inconceivable. Such a blessing must be the gift of infinite bounty, or it can never come to man.

Furthermore, beloved, remember that “now are we the sons of God.” Can you realize that truth? As others are not, believers are, the sons of God. He is their Father and the spirit of adoption breathes within their heart. They are the children of His family, and come to Him as children come to a father, with loving confidence. Think of being made a son of God, a son of Him that made the heavens, a son of Him who is God over all, blessed forever. Can any man deserve that? Certainly not, this also must come as a gift.

Sonship leads on to heirship. “If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.” My brothers, if you are a believer, all things are yours, this world, and worlds to come. Could you ever deserve all that? Could such an inheritance have come to you through any merits of your own? No, it must be a gift. Look at it, and the blaze of its splendor will strike all idea of merit blind.

Further than that, we are now made one with Christ. Oh, tell everywhere this wonder which God has wrought for His people! It is not to be understood, it is an abyss too deep for a finite mind to sound. Every believer is truly united to Christ, “For we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones.” Every believer is married to Christ, and none of them shall ever be separated from Him.

Seeing then, that there is such a union between us and Christ, can you suppose that any man can have any claim to such a position apart from the grace of God? By what merit, even of a perfect man, could we deserve to become one with Christ in an endless unity? Such a surpassing privilege is out of the line of purchase. It is, and can only be, the gift of God. Oneness with Christ cannot come to us in any other way.

Listen yet again. In consequence of our union with Christ, God the Holy Spirit dwells in every believer. Our bodies are His temple. God dwells in us and we dwell in God. Can we deserve that? Even a perfect keeping of the law would not have brought to men the abiding of the Holy Ghost in them. It is a blessing that rises higher than the law could ever reach, even if it had been kept.

Let me say furthermore, that if you possess a blessed peace, as I trust you do, if you can say—

*“My heart is resting, O my God;  
I will give thanks and sing;  
My heart is at the secret source  
Of every precious thing;”*

that divine peace must surely be the gift of God. If there is a great calm within your soul, an entire satisfaction with Christ your Lord, you never deserved that precious boon. It is the work of His Holy Spirit, and must be His free gift.

And when you come to die, as you may—unless the Lord comes, as He will—the grace that will enable you fearlessly to face the last enemy will not be yours by any right of your own. If you fall asleep, as I have seen many a Christian pass away, with songs of triumph, with the light of heaven shining on your brow, almost in glory while yet you are in your bed, why, you cannot deserve that! Such a deathbed must be the free gift of God’s almighty grace. It cannot be earned by any merit, indeed it is just then that every thought of merit melts away, and the soul hides itself in Christ, and triumphs there.

If this does not convince you, look once more. Let a window be opened in heaven. See the long lines of white-robed saints. Hark to their hallelujahs. Behold their endless, measureless delight. Did they deserve to come there? Did they come to their thrones and to their palms of victory by their own merits? Their answer is, “We have washed our robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” And from them all comes the harmonious anthem, “*Non nobis, Domine*”—“Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us; but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy and thy truth’s sake.”

From first to last then, we see that salvation is all the gift of God. And what can be freer than a gift, or more glorious than the gift of God? No prize can approach it in excellence, no merit can be mentioned in the same hour. O my brethren, we are debtors indeed to the mercy of God! We have received much and there is more to follow, but it is all of grace from first to last. We know but little yet at what a cost these gifts were purchased for us, but we shall know it better by and by, as McCheyne so sweetly sings—

*“When this passing world is done,  
When has sunk yon glaring sun;  
When I stand with Christ in glory,  
Looking o’er life’s finished story,  
Then, Lord, shall I fully know—  
Not till then, how much I owe.*

*“When I stand before the throne,  
Dressed in beauty not my own;  
When I see Thee as Thou art,  
Love Thee with unsinning heart;  
Then, Lord, shall I fully know,  
Not till then, how much I owe!”*

**II.** Now I would try to lead your thoughts in another direction as we consider that THIS GIFT IS UNSPEAKABLE.

Do not think it means that we cannot speak about this gift. Ah, how many times have I, for one, spoken upon this gift during the last forty years! I have spoken of little else. I heard of one who said, “I

suppose Spurgeon is preaching that old story over again.” Yes, that is what he is doing, and if he lives another twenty years, and you come here, it will be “the old, old story” still, for there is nothing like it.

It is inexhaustible, it is like an Artesian well that springeth up forever and ever. We can speak about it, yet it is unspeakable. What mean we then, by saying it is unspeakable? Well, as I have said already, Christ Jesus our Lord is the sum and substance of salvation, and of God’s gift. O God, this gift of Yours is unspeakable, and it includes all other gifts beside!

*“Thou did not spare Thine only Son,  
But gav’st Him for a world undone,  
And freely with that Blessed One—  
Thou givest all.”*

Consider first, that Christ is unspeakable *in His person*. He is perfect man and glorious God. No tongue of seraph, or of cherub, can ever describe the full nature of Him whose name is, “Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of peace.” This is He whom the Father gave “for us men, and for our sakes.” He was the Creator of all things, for “without him was not anything made that was made,” yet He was “made of flesh and dwelt among us.” He fills all things by His omnipresence, yet He came and tabernacled on the earth.

This is that Jesus who was born of Mary, yet who lived before all worlds. He was that Word who “was in the beginning with God, and the Word was God.” He is unspeakable. It is not possible to put into human language the divine mystery of His sacred being, truly man and yet truly God. But how great the wonder of it! Soul, God gave God for you! Dost you hear it? To redeem you, O believing man, God gave Himself to be your Savior, surely, that is an unspeakable gift.

Christ is unspeakable next *in His condescension*. Can anyone measure or describe how far Christ stooped, when from the throne of splendor, He came to the manger to be swaddled and lie where the horned oxen fed. Oh, what a stoop of condescension was that! The Infinite becomes an infant. The Eternal is dandled on a woman’s knee. He is there in the carpenter’s shop, obedient to His parents, there in the temple sitting among the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions, there in poverty, crying, “The Son of man hath not where to lay His head,” and there in thirst, asking of a guilty woman a drink of water. It is unspeakable.

That He, before whom the hosts of heaven veiled their faces, should come here among men, and among the poorest of the poor—that He who dwelt amidst the glory and the bliss of the land of light, should deign to be a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, passes human thought! Such a Savior is a gift unspeakable.

But if unspeakable so far, what shall I say of the fashion of Christ *in His death*? Beloved, I cannot speak adequately of Gethsemane and the bloody sweat, nor of the Judas kiss, nor of the traitorous flight of the disciples. It is unspeakable. That binding, scourging, plucking of the beard, and spitting in the face! Man’s tongue cannot utter the horror of it.

I cannot truly tell you the weight of the false accusations, the slanders, and the blasphemies that were heaped on Him, nor would I wish to picture the old soldier’s cloak flung over His bleeding shoulders and the crown of thorns, the buffeting, the mailed fists, and the shame and sorrow He endured, as He was thrust out to execution. Do you wish to follow Him along the streets, where weeping women lifted up their hearts in tender sympathy for the Lord of love about to die? If you do, it must be in silence, for words but feebly tell how much He bore on the way to the cross.

*“Well might the sun in darkness hide,  
And shut his glories in.  
When God, the mighty Maker, died  
For man, the creature’s sin.”*



Oh, it was terrible that HE should be nailed to the gibbet, that HE should hang there to be ridiculed by all the mob of Jerusalem! The abjects flouted Him, the meanest thought Him meaner than themselves. Even dying thieves upbraided Him. His eyes are choked. They become dim with blood. He must die. He says, "It is finished." He bows His head. The glorious Victim has yielded up His life to put away His people's sin. This is God's gift to you, divine, unspeakable, O ye sons of men!

But that is not all. Christ is unspeakable *in His glory*. When we think of His resurrection, of His ascending to heaven, and of His glory at the right hand of God, words languish on our lips; but in every one of these positions, He is the gift of God to us, and when He shall come with all the glory of the Father, He will still be to His people the *Theo-dora*, the gift of God, the great unspeakable benediction to the sons of men. I wish that the people of Christ had this aspect of the Lord's glory more continually on their hearts, for though He seems to tarry, yet will He come again the second time, as He promised.

*"With that blessed hope before us,  
Let no harp remain unstrung;  
Let the mighty Advent chorus  
Onward roll on every tongue.  
Maranatha.  
Come, Lord Jesus, quickly come!"*

To me, one of the most wonderful aspects of this gift is Christ *in His chosen*, all the Father gave Him, all for whom He died, these He will glorify with Himself, and they shall be with Him where He is. Oh, what a sight will that be when we shall see the King in His beauty, and all His saints beautiful in His glory, shining like so many stars around Him who is the Sun of them all! Then indeed, shall we see what an unspeakable gift God gave to men, when through that gift, He makes His saints all glorious, even as He predestined them, "to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn of many brethren."

But we do not need to wait until we see His face to know His glory. Brethren, Christ is unspeakable as the gift of God *in the heart here*. "Oh," say you, "I trust I have felt the love of God shed abroad in my heart!" I rejoice with you, but could you speak it? Often, when I have tried to preach the love of Christ, I have not been able to preach it rightly, because I did not feel it as I ought, but oftener still, I have not been able to tell it out because I felt it so much. I would fain preach in that manner always, and feel Christ's love so much that I could speak it but a little.

Oh, child of God, if you have known much of Christ, you have often had to weep out your joys instead of speaking them, to lay your finger on your mouth, and be silent because you were overpowered by His glory. See how it was with John, "When I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead." Why did you not preach, John? If he were here tonight, he would say, "I could not preach then, the splendor of the Lord made me dumb. I fell at His feet as dead." This is one reason why the gift of God is unspeakable, because, the more you know about it, the less you can say about it.

Christ overpowers us, He makes us tongue-tied with His wondrous revelations. When He reveals Himself in full, we are like men that are blinded with excess of vision. Like Paul, on the Damascus road, we are forced to confess, "I could not see for the glory of that light." We cannot speak of it fully. All the apostles and prophets and saints of God have been trying to speak out the love of God as manifested in Christ, but yet they have all failed.

I say, with great reverence, that the Holy Ghost Himself seems to have labored for expression, and as He had to use human pens and mortal tongues, even He has never spoken to the full the measure and value of God's unspeakable gift. It is unspeakable to men by God Himself. God can give it, but He cannot make us fully understand it. We have need to be like God Himself to comprehend the greatness of His gift when He gives us His Son.

Though we make constant effort, it is unspeakable, even *throughout a long life*. Do you ministers, who have been a long time in one place, ever say to yourselves, "We shall run dry for subjects by and

by”? If you preach Christ, you will never run short. If you have preached ten thousand sermons about Christ, you have not yet left the shore, you are not out in the deep sea yet. Dive, my brother! With splendor of thought, plunge into this great mystery of free grace and dying love, and when you have dived the farthest, you will perceive that you are as far off the bottom as when you first touched the surface. It is an endless theme, it is unspeakable!

*“Oh, could I speak the matchless worth,  
Oh, could I sound the glories forth  
Which in my Savior shine!  
I’d soar and touch the heavenly strings,  
And vie with Gabriel while he sings  
In notes almost divine.”*

But I can neither speak it nor sing it as I ought, yet would I finish Medley’s hymn and say—

*“Well, the delightful day will come  
When my dear Lord will bring me home,  
And I shall see His face;  
Then with my Savior, Brother, Friend,  
A blest eternity I’ll spend,  
Triumphant in His grace.”*

But even then, Christ will still be *in heaven forever* a gift unspeakable. Perhaps we shall have another talk together, friends, on this subject when we get there. One good woman said to me, “We shall have more time in eternity than we have now,” to which I replied, “I do not know whether there is any time in eternity, the words look like a contradiction.” “Oh, but,” said she, “I shall get a talk with you, anyhow, I have never had one yet.”

Well, I dare say we shall commune up there of these blessed things when we shall know more about them. As we are to be there forever and ever, we shall need some great subjects with which to keep up the conversation, what vaster theme can we have than this? Addison, in one of his verses, says—

*“But oh! eternity’s too short  
To utter half Thy praise,”*

and I have heard simpletons say that the couplet was very faulty, “You cannot make eternity short,” they say. That shows the difference between a poet and a critic.

A critic is a being all teeth, without any heart, while a poet is one who has much heart, and who sometimes finds that human language is not sufficient to express his thoughts. We shall never have done with Christ in heaven. Oh, my Lord, Thy presence will make my heaven!

*“Millions of years my wondering eyes,  
Shall o’er Thy beauties rove;  
And endless ages I’ll adore  
The glories of Thy love.”*

This wondrous gift of God is an utterly inexhaustible, unspeakable subject.

**III.** Now lastly, I come to this point, that FOR THIS GIFT THANKS SHOULD BE RENDERED.

The text says, “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.” By this the apostle not only meant that he gave thanks for Christ, but he thus calls upon the church, and upon every individual believer, to join him in his praise. Here do I adopt his language, and praise God on my own behalf, calling upon all of

you who know the preciousness of Christ, the gift of God, to unite with me in thanksgiving. Let us as with one heart say it now, “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.”

Some cannot say this, for they never think of the gift of God. You who never think of God, how can you thank God? There must be “think” at the bottom of “thank.” Whenever we think, we ought to thank. But some never think, and therefore never thank.

Beloved friend, what are you at? That Christ should die, is it nothing to you? That God “gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life,” is that nothing to you? Let the question drop into your heart. Press it home upon yourself. Will you say that you have no share in this gift? Will you deliberately give up any hope you may have of ever partaking of the grace of God? Are you determined now to say, “I do not care about Christ”? Well, you would hardly like to say that, but why do you practically declare this to be your intention, if you do not want to say it? Oh, that you might now so think of Christ as to trust Him at once, and begin to raise this note of praise!

Some, on the other hand, do not thank God because they are always delaying. Have I not hearers here tonight who were here ten years ago, and were rather more hopeful then than they are now? “There is plenty of time,” say you, but you do not say this about other matters.

I admired the children the other day, when the teacher said, “Dear children, the weather is unsettled. You can go out next Wednesday, but do you not think it would be better to stop a month, so that we could go when the weather is more settled?” There was not a child that voted for stopping a month. All the hands went up for going next Wednesday. Now, imitate the children in that. Do not make it seem as if you were in a no hurry to be happy, for as he that believes in Christ has eternal life, to postpone having it is an unworthy as well as unwise thing to do. No, you will have it, I hope, at once.

There is a man here who is going to be a very rich man when his old aunt dies. You do not wish that she should die, I am sure, but you sometimes wonder why some people are spared to be ninety, do you not? You are very poor now, and you wish that some of this money could come to you at once, you are not for putting that off. Why should you put off heavenly riches and eternal life? I beseech you to believe in Christ now, then you will be filled with thankfulness and joy.

Some cannot say, “Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift,” for they do not know whether they have it or not. They sometimes think that they have, but they oftener fear that they have not. Never tolerate a doubt on this subject, I implore you. Get full assurance. “Lay hold on eternal life.” Get a grip of it. Know Christ, trust Christ wholly, and you have God’s word for it, “He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.” Then you can say, “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.”

Now, dear friends, let me ask you to join in this exercise. Let us first unitedly *thank God for this gift*. Put out of your mind the idea that you ought to thank Christ, but not thank the Father. It was the Father that gave Christ. Christ did not die to make His Father love us, as some say that we preach. We have always preached the very opposite, and we have quoted that verse of Kent!—

*“’Twas not to make JEHOVAH’s love  
Towards the sinner flame,  
That Jesus, from His throne above,  
A suffering man became.*

*“’Twas not the death which He endured,  
Nor all the pangs He bore,  
That God’s eternal love procured,  
For God was love before.”*

He gave His Son because He already loved us! Christ is the exhibition of the Father’s love, and the revelation of Christ is made because of “the love of the Spirit.” Therefore, “Thanks be unto God”—the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost—“for his unspeakable gift.”



While you saved ones, every one of you, raise your note of gratitude, be very careful to *thank God only*. Do not be thinking by whose means you were converted, and begin to thank the servant instead of the Lord whom he serves. Let the man who was used as the instrument in God's hand be told, for his comfort, of the blessing God sent you through him, but thank God, and thank only God, that you were led to lay hold of Christ who is His unspeakable gift.

Moreover, *thank God spontaneously*. Look at the apostle and imitate him. When he sounded this peal of praise, his mind was occupied at the time about the collection for the poor saints, but collection or no collection, he will thank God for His unspeakable gift. I like to see thanks to God come up at what might seem to be an untimely moment. When a man does not feel just as happy as he might be, and yet says, "Thank God," it sounds refreshingly real.

I like to hear such a bubbling up of praise as in the case of old Father Taylor of New York, when he broke down in the middle of a sentence. Looking up at the people, he said, "There now! the nominative has lost its verb, but hallelujah! I am on the way to glory," and so he went on again. Sometimes we ought to do just like that. Take an opportunity, when there comes a little interval, just to say, "Whether this is in tune or not, I cannot help it, thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

Lastly, as you receive the precious gift, *thank God practically*. Thank God by doing something to prove your thanks. It is a poor gratitude which only effervesces in words, but shirks deeds of kindness. Real thankfulness will not be in word only, but in deed too, and so it will prove that it is in truth.

"Well, what could I do that would please God?" you say. First, I should think you could look for His lost children. That is a sure way to please Him. Go tonight and see whether you cannot find one of the erring whom you might bring back to the fold. Would you not please a mother, if she had lost her baby, and you set to work to find it? We need to please God. Seek the lost ones, and bring them in.

If you want to please God, next, succor His poor saints. If you know anything of them, help them. Do something for them for Christ's sake. I knew a woman who used always to relieve anybody that came to her door in the dress of a sailor. I do not think that half those who came to her ever had been to sea at all, but still, if they came to the door as sailors, she used to say, "Ah! my dear boy was a sailor. I have not seen him for years. He is lost somewhere at sea, but for dear Jack's sake, I always help every sailor that comes to my door." It is a right feeling, is it not?

I remember, when I first came to London from my country charge, I used to think that if I came across a dog or a cat that came from Waterbeach, I would like to feed it. So, for love of Christ, love Christ's poor people. Whenever you find them, say, "My Lord was poor, and so are you, and for His dear sake I will help you."

If you want to please God, next, bear with the evil ones. Do not lose your temper, I mean by that, do not get angry with the unthankful and the evil. Let your anger be lost in praise for the gift unspeakable. Please God by bearing with evil men, as He bears with you. But if you have a very bad temper, I hope that, in another sense, you may lose it and never find it any more.

And lastly, if you want to please God, watch, like the Thessalonians, "for his Son from heaven." The Lord Jesus is coming again, in like manner as He departed, and there is no attitude with which God is more delighted in His saved people than with that of watching for the time when "unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation."

Beloved, may God help you thus to magnify His Son, and to Him shall be all the praise! Let us again lift up our glad hallelujah, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." Amen.

## PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—2 CORINTHIANS 9

### HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—534, 236, 428

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## THE GREATEST FIGHT IN THE WORLD

The Pastors' College Conference Address, 1891  
By C. H. Spurgeon

Dr. Pierson, preaching at the Tabernacle, on February 25<sup>th</sup>, 1892, referred to Mr. Spurgeon's last conference address in the following glowing terms: I read with greatest interest that address that he delivered before the conference, and which is now published under the title of *The Greatest Fight in the World*. I have no hesitation in saying that I think that that address is the greatest single utterance that Mr. Spurgeon ever gave to the world. It is, I suppose, the last one that he prepared with careful and painstaking elaboration before he left this world.

If you will read that address, you will find that it is, in the first place, full of the most glorious Gospel truths. In the second place, it fairly bristles with Biblical illustrations and figures of speech, and in the third place, which is more wonderful, it runs in the mold of a Scriptural dialect, as though the man were himself first of all saturated with the phraseology of Scripture, and then when he came to express himself on that critical occasion, his thoughts fell into the form of a Scriptural expression as naturally as water runs in the channel scooped out for it by the brook. That is a marvellous address.

I wish it might be published in the cheapest form, and given away to every living soul that can read the English tongue, and translated into every language on earth, that every man who is open to the convictions of truth might read it. And I would to God that the men who have learned the art of preaching a sermon and leaving out the Christ, or of preaching the Christ in the language of the schools, and so shooting their arrows over the heads of the common people, could, from that single address, learn the secret of telling the story of God, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, expressing spiritual things in spiritual terms! I never had, in all my little experience, a discourse that made a deeper impression on my mind as to the prophetic style of utterance being reproduced in the prophets of the modern pulpit.

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Taken from The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit C. H. Spurgeon Collection. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at [www.spurgeongems.org](http://www.spurgeongems.org).